

XIIth conference of the Foundation for Endangered Languages

# Abstracts

Alphabetically ordered by last name of the first author

## Difficulties of Teaching Kurdish in a European University

**Hashem Ahmadzadeh**

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### **Abstract**

Despite being one of the major Indo-Iranian languages, Kurdish has rarely had an official status as a taught language. In Turkey, where the majority of the Kurds live, the Kurdish language has officially been banned as a medium of communication. In Iran, Kurds have been allowed to use their language, but it has never been a language of education. During the modern era, i.e. after the establishment of the new nation states in the Middle East after WWI, only the Kurds of Iraq have had linguistic rights, such as being allowed to be taught in Kurdish. Not being a medium of education has prevented the Kurdish language from developing as a modern language that can face the challenges of living in a modern world. The ambition of some Western universities to have Kurdish as a taught language in their programmes has contributed significantly to the development of the Kurdish language. Nonetheless, the presence of Kurdish in the syllabuses of some Western universities has been a challenge to the tutors of this language. This article aims to shed light on the various problems that the teaching of Kurdish encounters in Western universities. The focus will be on the author's experience of teaching Kurdish at the University of Uppsala in Sweden and at the Centre for Kurdish Studies as a newly established centre at the University of Exeter in the UK. The article considers how problems such as dialect differences and the lack of text books, dictionaries and grammar books make the teaching of Kurdish so challenging. At the same time the fact that students of the Kurdish language cannot experience learning it in an exclusively Kurdish environment will be discussed as one of the major obstacles to the training of fluent Kurdish speakers

## **Endangered Languages and Japanese Language Education in Sakhalin**

**Yoshiyuki Asahi**

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### **Abstract**

This paper considers five endangered languages (Sakhalin Japanese, Sakhalin Korean, Nivkh, Uilta, and Ainu) in Sakhalin Island in Russia, and discusses the sociolinguistic situation for each of these endangered languages from a historical point of view. Details of the language education in each endangered language are illustrated in relation to the Japanese and Russian language education. The paper points out how Sakhalin Korean, Nivkh, and Uilta in today's Sakhalin are supported by the local government; ethnic schools and cultural centers are established in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. At the same time, it indicates that the situation differs from one endangered language to another. Based upon the discussions, this paper considers the degree of the impact that Japanese language education in the Japanese domination period (1905-1945) and Russian language education in the Russian domination period (1945-present) has had on the endangered languages. Lastly, this paper explores ways and means of maintaining and revitalizing Sakhalin Japanese with some plans for the future.

# **The presence (or absence) in education of minority and regional languages in one European and one Asian context: the cases of Cimbrian, Friulian and other regional and minority languages in Italy and of Iban and other minority languages in Brunei Darussalam**

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## **Abstract**

Italy and Brunei are two very different countries, with different histories, climates, cultures, traditions, etc. However, one thing they do have in common: the sociolinguistic position of their minority and regional languages. In both cases, language shift towards the majority language (Italian and Malay respectively) or towards the language of wider communication (English) is ongoing, and most of these minority languages are clearly endangered, as the sociolinguistic surveys available and the parameters of language endangerment applied to them clearly show.

After a general introduction to the sociolinguistic situation of regional and minority languages in Italy and Brunei and their degree of endangerment, the paper looks specifically at education in the two countries as far as these languages are concerned, with special reference to Cimbrian, Friulian and other regional languages in Italy, and Iban in Brunei. This section outlines what has been done so far for these languages in the area of acquisition planning and shows what people's attitudes are vis-à-vis the possibility of having the local language introduced in schools. In the conclusion, some suggestions are made as to what kind of bilingual programmes may be implemented to slow down or reverse the ongoing language shift.

## **Language Policies – Impact on Language Maintenance and Teaching. Focus on Malaysia, Singapore and The Philippines**

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## **Abstract**

This paper will describe the language policies, planning and implementation in selected Asean countries and discuss the impact of such policies on the maintenance of a number of languages and dialects. The paper will specifically examine the minority languages in Malaysia, Singapore and Philippines that have been and are being abandoned and examine how language policies, planning and implementation contribute to language shift and language death. Language learning of minority endangered languages can take place in institutional or community settings. In such settings, the use of 'multiliteracies' to revive 'threatened' languages in new learning venues will be discussed.

## **Learning of Minority Languages in Yunnan, China**

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### **Abstract**

Still at a rudimentary stage, learning of minority languages in Yunnan is conducted typically in a transitional bilingual mode, where minority languages are used in school to help pupils to master Chinese. Major problems in promoting minority languages in Yunnan include: unavailability of an (agreed) writing system, pupils in the same class speaking mutually unintelligible 'dialects' of a minority language, shortage of qualified teachers, and lack of well-designed curriculum and textbooks. Literacy programs designed for adults in villages, although often run with great success, are short-lived due to insufficiency of written materials which could help to sustain the quickly-acquired reading ability. This paper will look at different situations in learning of minority languages spoken by the Dai, Tibetan, Yi, Lisu, Jingpo, Bai, Hani and Naxi nationalities in Yunnan.

## **Language Immersion in Endangered Pamiri Communities: Elicitation Strategies in Tutorial Work**

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### **Abstract**

The present situation of language in the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Badakhshan (Republic Tajikistan) – a multilingual region with a range of endangered languages that have no literary tradition. The introduction of an official language policy focused on the titular Tajik (Persian) language. The cultural partition of speech styles between, on the one hand, written language and high style in Persian (Tajik) and, on the other, everyday speech in mother tongues over several generations, means that Pamiri languages are spoken by communities, but not taught and learnt at grassroots level. The turn of the twentieth century saw fundamental changes to Badakhshan's traditional political and cultural patterns, which were interrelated with profound socio-economic transformations affecting every aspect of life at all levels. This is why, in rethinking the present situation of local languages in Badakhshan, training in mother tongues is pivotal in the context of the overall socio-linguistic situation. Bringing together data and approaches from several traditions, this paper aims at identifying new methodological devices and techniques. We will also discuss critical views and explore innovative ways of collecting language information. We aim to further the study of social language history and language preservation both through our own research, and through the efforts for maintaining their languages by the citizens themselves in modern Badakhshan.

# **Bilingualism, Language Teaching, Language Transmission and Language Endangerment: The Case of Amazigh in Morocco**

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## **Abstract**

The aim of the present paper is to investigate language endangerment in Morocco. The focus is on the interplay between bilingualism and language endangerment. The study also investigates the role of teaching and transmission in language maintenance and revival. Two hypotheses underlie the present study: (i) Amazigh - Darija bilingualism is transitional and a stage towards Darija monolingualism (ii) Amazigh teaching cannot guarantee the maintenance of a language whose speakers are progressively and consciously choosing not to transmit it to the future generations. The study is concerned with the situation of Amazigh in Morocco in general and the Beni Iznassen community in particular. It adopts a qualitative approach inscribed in an eclectic framework based on an exhaustive fieldwork investigation (linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse analysis, anthropology, sociology, etc.). The analysis reveals that despite the changes in the authorities' attitudes and discourse, Amazigh is still perceived as a non-prestigious language given its status on the Moroccan linguistic market and the importance of foreign languages, especially French for social mobility. We can claim that teaching may help revive the language and delay its death, but it will not help maintain it as a community language.

## **European Minority Languages: Endangered or Revived?**

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## **Abstract**

A diagnosis is offered of language learning factors that contribute to the revival of European minority languages. In this paper four frameworks will be discussed. [1] The theory of Reversing Language Shift (Fishman 1991, 2001). The “family-home-neighborhood-community-nexus” is the central stage for language learning in the GIDS-scale of degrees of ‘disruption’ of minority language communities. [2] The Euromosaic study (Nelde, Strubell and Williams 1996), is a comparative study of minority language groups in the European Union. It offers a theoretical framework which gives a central place to reproduction and production of language groups through language learning as first and as second language. An important outcome is the ranking of language groups. [3] The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of the Council of Europe (1998). The Charter provides a formal division into social fields which are relevant for the promotion of learning of minority languages. [4] The Unesco Ad hoc expert group on language endangerment (2003) has proposed a set of nine factors to assess the vitality of a particular threatened language, where continued language learning is of crucial importance. These four approaches will be compared on the dimension of language learning.

## **Nivkh Syntax in Educational Perspective**

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### **Abstract**

Nivkh, also known as Gilyak, is spoken in several dialects on Sakhalin Island and the Amur region of Russia. The language is highly endangered: according to the last 2002 census, the number of speakers does not exceed 9.2% (477 persons). Nevertheless, some attempts are being made to preserve and revive the Nivkh language. Since 1981, Nivkh has been studied up to the fourth grade in three elementary schools on Sakhalin. Several primers, textbooks and dictionaries have been published in the East-Sakhalin and Amur dialects. Since the books used in the school curriculum are oriented towards the teaching in the lower grades of school, they comprise grammatical information that tends to focus on phonological and morphological topics of Nivkh. The syntax is described rather poorly and is basically limited to the structure of a clause. The paper discusses syntactic topics that are essential for learning the language and may be included into pedagogical materials to be created later for use in Nivkh local schools. I proceed from the assumption that educationally-oriented syntactic description of Nivkh should be theoretically in line with the corresponding syntactic description of Russian language which is a mother tongue for all Nivkh children.

## **Attempting to document and revitalise Kormakiti Maronite Arabic**

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### **Abstract**

Kormakiti Maronite Arabic (KMA) has been classified as an endangered language in need of protection within the framework of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Kormakiti Maronite Arabic is spoken by a small community of speakers in Cyprus and it exhibits a disruption in its generational continuity (Hadjidemetriou: forthcoming). It has been heavily influenced by its contact with Cypriot Greek (CG) (Borg 1985, Newton 1964). Kormakiti Maronite Arabic has been categorised as an Arabic-Greek mixed language (Thomason and Kaufman 1988, Thomason 2001, Thomason 2003), rather than a variety of Arabic with extensive structural borrowing from CG. The opposing view claims that KMA has been erroneously classified a mixed language (Bakker 2003, Hadjidemetriou: forthcoming). The aim of this paper is twofold: (i) to outline the prospects for language documentation preparatory to a language revitalization programme that will be implemented in accordance with the recommendations of the committee of ministers of the Council of Europe in response to the Republic of Cyprus' application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, (ii) to consider the current revitalisation efforts of the government of the Republic of Cyprus and of the KMA community and to examine the strength of these efforts for the survival of KMA.

## **Some remarks on language maintenance and the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in the Netherlands**

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### **Abstract**

This paper will discuss the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in the Netherlands, especially in the domain of education. The Charter can be seen as one of the language policy instruments to increase the communicative potency of a regional language. The Netherlands have endorsed nine provisions from Article 8 of the European Charter. In cooperation with the provincial authorities of Fryslân, the central government focuses on the establishment and implementation of statutory measures and on the relevant preconditions, financial and otherwise. Especially in the domains of primary and secondary education the current situation is not in accordance with the undertakings entered into by the Netherlands. As a matter of fact, central and provincial authorities use two different interpretations of the text of the Charter, making possible a different appreciation of the implementation. Obviously, such a lack of agreement in problem definition does not contribute to progress in policy development. The implementation of the European Charter in the Netherlands can still be improved and developed.

## **How majority languages influence minority languages: the linguistic mechanisms and some consequences for language maintenance through education**

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### **Abstract**

Language systems of bilinguals interact in devious ways. As we will see, this interaction is to the advantage of vocabulary items from the minority language which have high phonological similarity to their semantic equivalents in the majority language. Such items oust rival items in the minority language which are less similar. The pressure from the vocabulary items of the majority language is a function of their frequency. Thus, Frisian vocabulary items similar to Dutch ones are linked to their Dutch counterparts and 'profit by collaboration' from the frequency of the Dutch items. At the same time, these frequency effects discourage those Frisian items or constructions which differ strongly from Dutch. The result is language change by impoverishment. We will analyze several changes in Frisian as a reflection of the process sketched above: *Word-final -e in nouns and compounds; word order among verbs; vocabulary change; choice of nominalising suffix*. Minority language education often tends to focus, counter-productively, on specialized

or old-fashioned grammar and vocabulary. It is argued that language education, instead, should focus on vocabulary items and grammatical phenomena which can be frequently used in everyday speech.

## **Mother Tongue, Language of Immersion: What Can the School do to Revitalize Minorized Languages?**

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### **Abstract**

This paper deals with the debate about mother tongue education situations worldwide and with immersion programmes aiming to enhance the preservation of linguistic and cultural diversity worldwide. Their presence in school is a key factor for the development and the survival of minority languages. It allows people to elaborate bilingual and multilingual education systems that are more suitable than the widespread monolingual systems.

Immersion programs are one of the most effective ways to enhance the transmission of minority languages in contact with dominant languages. The collected quantitative and qualitative data about bilingual education in the Basque Country have proved the extreme effectiveness of those programmes.

This evidence shows that this possibility is real and the results are very promising. Moreover, the challenges posed by the immersion models constitute one of the most encouraging matters for education and linguistic research to be developed in the 21st century.

## **Gaps in Linguistic Analyses and Their Ramifications for Teaching Endangered Languages**

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### **Abstract**

This paper will explore how gaps in linguistic analyses of Muskogee, a Native American language, have affected advanced language course content and the production of language teaching materials. Discourse-level conjunctions, particles indicating emotional tone, use of switch-reference markers across sentence boundaries, and variation in tense marking within discourses have not been covered in any great detail in the linguistic literature about Muskogee. The ways in which the ideological and practical facets of the teachers' responses to these linguistic gaps work together will be explored by analyzing what a lack of attention to variation in tense and the use of conjunctions in discourse has meant for students of Muskogee. A recognition of the fact that many speakers and teachers of endangered language tend to assume that

linguists' descriptions do focus on the more important or interesting features of their languages, makes it imperative that those creating language teaching materials, producing linguistic analyses, or working with language teachers are aware of the existing gaps in the linguistic literature and try to incorporate the missing elements when appropriate.

## **Developing New Yiddish Pedagogical Resources**

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### **Abstract**

The subject of this paper is a new project to develop supplementary resources for the instruction of elementary Yiddish in universities and further education settings. Yiddish is a seriously endangered stateless language. However, the past twenty years have seen an increased interest in the language among adult students and a concurrent growth in elementary Yiddish courses at universities worldwide. While several textbooks have been published for use in such settings, there are as yet no accompanying materials designed for teachers to employ in the classroom when introducing and reinforcing grammatical and lexical topics. The present project, which aims to help fill this gap, will constitute a collection of resources on approximately thirty points of grammar and lexis typically introduced in first-year Yiddish courses. Each section will consist of a range of exercises and games for the topic in question. Some of the materials will take the form of MP3 recordings. The project is expected to culminate in the publication of a book and accompanying CD, with a view to later adaptation for digital environments and the instruction of other endangered languages. It is hoped that this project will serve as the basis for the development of further Yiddish pedagogical resources.

## **Preserving Endangered Languages or Local Speech Variants in Kamchatka**

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### **Abstract**

This paper concerns various language preservation projects in the Russian Far East that center on the production and dissemination of multimedia language teaching materials (DVD with textbook) with culturally adapted content, designed for use inside and outside the classroom. They refer to the endangered language of Itelmen as well as to endangered local variants of the Even and the Koryak languages spoken in Kamchatka.

## **Mother Tongue Classes at School, In the Context of Selkup, Ket, and Evenki Communities**

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### **Abstract**

The paper presents some results of the analysis of linguistic and sociolinguistic materials concerning mother tongue classes in local schools of Selkup, Ket, and Evenki communities in the Upper and Middle Taz and the Middle Yenisei basins (Northern Siberia). The materials were collected during a series of linguistic expeditions led in 1998-2007 and are a sort of by-product of those expeditions. They reflect the situation in 25 villages. In all the villages the main means of communication both at home and in the community life is Russian. Children capable of speaking their ancestral language can still be found, but only in one Evenki and in two Selkup villages. In 23 villages out of 25 surveyed villages there is a school, at least a primary one, and in 21 of them they have (or recently had) mother tongue classes, but our surveys showed that up to now these mother tongue classes were practically ineffective. Thus, it is clear that the fact that a heritage language is taught at school does not automatically contribute to its preservation. Our understanding of the situation and the ways of its possible improvement are discussed.

## **Sociolinguistic description of the Priuralskij county of Yamalo-Nenetskij autonomous district**

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### **Abstract**

On the territory of the Russian Federation we can see many examples of language and cross cultural contacts. So the population of the North West of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District (Western Siberia) is represented by different ethnicities. The indigenous, aboriginal population consists of the Nenets and Khanty. This composition also includes Komi-Zyrjans, Siberian Tatars and Russians. An example of the main cross-cultural contacts between these nations is the fact of the mixture of Nenets, Khanty and Komi-Zyrjans cultures which is presented by the borrowings from the neighbouring languages. From our investigations we find that language and cross-cultural contacts between Nenets and Khanty occurred as a result of borrowings from neighboring reindeer breeding and fishing economy, intermarriages and barter relationships. The situation with Komi-Zyrjans is different. Between these ethnicities widespread bilingualism and multilingualism used to exist. Groups of Nenets, Khanty and Komi-Zyrjans who spoke two or three languages were so-called 'mediators' who connected cultures of neighbours with each others.

# **The Learning of Endangered Mother Tongue Languages of Minority, Immigrant Communities in Multilingual Contexts: The Case of Malayalam in Malaysia**

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## **Abstract**

Research (Nambiar, 2007) shows that the Malayalees, a minority, and immigrant community in multilingual and multiracial Malaysia, are shifting away from their mother tongue, Malayalam, towards English and Malay. One of the main reasons is the lack of proficiency in the mother tongue, particularly among the younger generations. This paper examines the reasons why learning of the ancestral language has not been successful and what remediation measures can be taken. While a number of factors such as lack of government support, paucity of trained teachers, out-dated teaching methodology, time and transport constraints can account for the lack of language learning success, the underlying factor seems to be the low priority accorded to language preservation by the community itself. Hence there is an urgent need to raise the awareness of the community regarding the significance of their ancestral language in preserving their unique identity as Malaysian Malayalees before instituting a number of language learning initiatives. These include a centralized language curriculum, up-to-date language teaching methodology, well-trained teachers, use of innovative teaching materials, as well as the setting up of learning institutions like a kindergarten and school where Malayalam teaching/ learning can be given its due.

## **Language Documentation and Pedagogy: Seeking Outcomes and Accountability**

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## **Abstract**

It is approaching 20 years since the wider recognition of impending global language collapse, and this year is the tenth anniversary of the birth of language documentation, the principal area targeted at addressing the problem. Documentation of languages has been defined as the creation of multipurpose records of a variety of speech genres and events (Himmelman 1998); but increasingly, there are doubts about how feasible or useful it is to do this. This paper raises further questions about what drives documentation goals and

methodologies, showing, for example, that documentation as it is currently practised mainly serves the purposes of descriptive and typological linguistics.

However, documentation can make a real contribution to the states of languages; the first step is to replace the difficult goal of revitalisation with concrete pedagogical activities to which documentation can contribute, for example by creating pedagogically relevant metadata, and extending its sociolinguistic investigations to make an enabling contribution to language development activities. In turn, through an interdisciplinary involvement with pedagogy, documentation itself stands to gain many benefits.

## **Winter Schools of the Latgalian Language and Culture in Achinsk Pedagogical College (Krasnoyarsk Region, Russia)**

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### **Abstract**

The idea for a Winter School in Latgalian Language and Culture occurred during expeditions/field trips organized to gather information about the Latgalians living in the Siberia. This is the reason why an expedition group has been going to Achinsk in Krasnoyarsk region for three years in winter now to teach local Latgalians and other interested people (students at Achinsk Pedagogical College) the Latgalian language – its grammar, lexis and practical usage, taking songs, games and riddles as the basis for it and promoting adoption of Latgalian culture as well. Topics from everyday life are used during classes to improve students' vocabulary. For instance, students speak about their families, about their surroundings, shopping, food, colours, clothes; thus they are encouraged to master the vocabulary necessary on the everyday communication level. Information about Latgale, its towns and settlements, traditional houses and other things characteristic of Latgale and the Latgalians, and about family names in Latgale and Siberia, is provided during lectures and seminars, revealing what is common and what is not in toponymy and other themes.

The Latgalians were also drawn into Winter School Final Concerts, with singing and dancing. It has been concluded that activities at the Winter schools encourage mutual communication among the Latgalians living in Achinsk and its surroundings, activities at the Achinsk Latgalian Society contribute to acquisition of the language and promote interest in the Latgalian language and culture among the students of Achinsk Pedagogical College as well. During work on the projects the Siberian Latgalians have also visited Latvia thus getting to know the places they have been told about at the lectures and seminars at the Winter school themselves and thereby strengthening their Latgalian self-consciousness and identity.

## **Endangered Aboriginal languages in Canada: Trends, Patterns and Prospects in Language Learning**

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### **Abstract**

This paper explores trends, patterns and prospects in language learning among endangered Aboriginal languages in Canada. A rich variety of demographic indicators and related factors on languages can be derived from Statistics: Canada's Census and Aboriginal Peoples Survey data. Indicators include measures of language learning that distinguish between learning a language as a mother tongue and learning it as a second language. Second language acquisition appears to be a relevant factor in assessing the state of endangered Aboriginal languages: in 2001, second language learners accounted for over half of the speaking population among some of the most endangered languages, and, overall for the vast majority, 71%, of children under age 15 able to speak an endangered language. Similarly, more recent 2006 Census data also indicate high shares of second language learners. Language learning varies by age, geographic location, and residence, across Aboriginal families, communities and their different languages. Some endangered Aboriginal languages and their communities are seeing increasing numbers of speakers due to a concerted effort to learn them as a second language, particularly among younger generations, while for others language learning in general appears to be in decline, with older populations of both first – and second – language speakers.

## **Teaching Materials on Language Endangerment An Interactive E-learning Module on the Internet**

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### **Abstract**

In 2007, in the framework of the NWO (Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research) Research Programme on Endangered Languages, an interactive e-learning module has been developed on language endangerment. The module for students in secondary schools (15-18 years of age) is available free of charge, so far in Dutch and in English, on the internet: <http://www.bedreigdetalen.nl>. In the learning module "Endangered Languages" students learn about the diversity of the world's languages, about the relationship between language and culture, why languages disappear, how serious that is, whether we can preserve languages and about the origins of language.

## **Endangered Languages Research and Teaching Experience in Russia**

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### **Abstract**

The work of the Research Group on Languages of Russia in the Institute for Philology of Saint Petersburg State University is devoted to language research and the study of minority languages in Russian Federation. A large number of languages in the Russian Federation is included into the list of the UNESCO Red Book of Endangered Languages. The primary idea of the Research Group “Languages of the Peoples of Russia” is connected with the phonetic and phonological study and documentation of endangered languages and the development of language teaching resources. This report presents information on the author’s own endangered languages research and teaching experience in the Russian Federation related to some of the endangered languages such as Buryat, Evenk, Saami, Khanty, Mansi, Nivkh. Research and teaching experience is based on the use of the material from the fieldwork data and phonetic seminars conducted by the author. In the period 2001-2008 the author visited several places in the Russian Federation from the Kola Peninsula in the west to Sakhalin island in the east and she conducted special phonetic seminars on the use of study of the speech sounds of the languages and the use of information technology in language teaching

## **Teaching in Multilingual Areas with a Minority Language: Guidelines for a European Training Model**

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### **Abstract**

This paper presents the experience of the Info-project ((Designing a training model for teachers working in multilingual areas with minority languages) funded by the European Commission. The idea of promoting professional training for teachers who work in multilingual areas where a minority language is spoken and taught at school, has been the basic framework of the entire Info-team work. Teaching in particular linguistic situations implies that teachers need to have particular competence and knowledge in order to promote the minority language in a multilingual curriculum. Promoting the minority language in the curriculum is also the first step that leads to a multilingual educational practice and it opens to a European view by focusing its main goal on minority and multilingual European areas. The paper presents part of the results from research carried out in eleven different European areas where a minority language is spoken. It also illustrates the Training Model, in which the competences have been considered as a fundamental part of the training curriculum, and its implementation through a European Course. Some suggestions that can be shared at the end of this pathway are also included.

## **Motivating young people to learn endangered languages**

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### **Abstract**

This paper explores young people's attitudes towards an endangered language and suggests ways of interesting them in revitalisation. The study focuses on Guernesiais, the indigenous language of Guernsey, Channel Islands, whose fluent speakers number only 2% of the total population, but also draws on examples from other contexts. Guernesiais is only taught in optional extra-curricular classes to children under 11, yet these have achieved a small measure of unexpected success. For teenagers, however, school-based language teaching may be demotivating and counter-productive, while the main available alternative, traditional cultural events, are aimed largely at older native speakers and also fail to motivate the adolescent age group. Motivating alternatives therefore need to be sought.

## **How Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can Help Language Preservation and Education**

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### **Abstract**

Computer technology can play an important role when it comes to language preservation. Frisian is a lesser used and more or less endangered language, spoken in the Dutch province of Fryslân. The provincial government stimulates the use of Frisian and has asked Polderland Language and Speech Technologies and the Fryske Akademy to develop tools for spell-checking and proof reading for the Frisian language. The province also funds the project.

Two pieces of software were created: *Taalhelp* and *Bernetaalhelp*. These tools contain spell-checking and proofreading features for adults (*Taalhelp*) and children (*Bernetaalhelp*). Resources needed to develop and to compile this kind of software are for instance the availability of an extensive lexicon and digitised dictionaries.

In the future *Taalhelp* will be enhanced with a grammar checker, text-to-speech function, speech-recognition, and a thesaurus. The technology used can benefit the efforts to preserve endangered languages.

## **Gaelic Language Erosion and Revitalization on the Isle of Skye, Scotland**

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### **Abstract**

This paper analyzes the language loss of three generations of a Gaelic-speaking family located on the Isle of Skye, Scotland. Participants' linguistic skills were assessed via language ability tests. We focused on plurals, passives, and tense, and we examined synthetic forms. The results confirmed that erosion is occurring in all areas investigated; in particular, the synthetic nature of Gaelic causes problems for younger generation speakers. This suggests weak language transmission through the generations as well as the dominance of English in the community. Through an interview with an expert informant, we also explored the implications of Gaelic education for the Gaelic-speaking community on Skye. Revitalization efforts are currently underway, but despite maintenance efforts such as Gaelic Medium Education (GME), English remains the language of the schoolchildren as well as the community at large. The authors feel that a concerted community revitalization effort is needed in congruence with the application of GME. Maintenance efforts should be directed towards sponsoring Gaelic-speaking community events so that GME students have the chance to speak Gaelic outside the classroom as well as understand the viability of the language for communication in different domains.

## **Threats to language immersion in endangered language communities: The case of Basque in Navarre**

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### **Abstract**

The Basque Country (*Euskal Herria*) is divided into three different administrations: the French Basque country, France; the Foral Community of Navarre, Spain and the Basque Autonomous Community, Spain. As a result of this division, there are three different legal frameworks with regard to the protection and normalization of the Basque language. This paper analyses the legal status of this language within the Foral Community of Navarre, with special attention to education. In this territory, even though there is a legal framework for the use and the teaching of the Basque languages, the obstacles set by the authorities are continuous. The development of the linguistic rights of the Basque people, within this territory, is a subject of discussion and a source of conflict because a significant part of the majority community has been reluctant to grant specific linguistic rights to the minority as it boosts discrimination. In Navarre, the linguistic rights of the Basque community instead of being developed have been contained.

## **Where There is No Teacher: Language Instruction in Diaspora**

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### **Abstract**

Approximately three quarters of the Rotuman population lives away from their native island in the South Pacific. In each overseas enclave, the Rotuman language is in competition with English. Because each Rotuman community is very small, there is no chance of the language being taught in the school systems. After-school or weekend language classes offer a better alternative, yet a lack of trained teachers and almost no available Rotuman language materials make this a nearly impossible task. This paper suggests that the principles of the Lexical Approach, developed by Michael Lewis, could be used both to create materials and to train native speaker instructors to use them. Sample materials are supplied in appendices.

## **How can Academic Institutions Help Support an Endangered Language? The Case of North Frisian.**

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### **Abstract**

It has long been recognised that academic institutions such as schools and universities can play a vital role in the context of an endangered language. In my paper I should like to discuss some of the possibilities open to such academic institutions, exploring some of the fields where their expertise can contribute to the maintenance and promotion of an endangered language, taking as my point of departure the Department of Frisian Studies at the University of Kiel and the Danish-Frisian school Risum Skole/Risem Schölj in North Frisia, both in Germany. I shall argue that an academic institution can not only impart knowledge in a number of sectors but can also have a direct bearing on developments both within and around the language community concerned.

## **Integrating Documentation and Formal Teaching of Kari'nja: Design and Use of Teaching Materials Based on Documentary Materials**

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### **Abstract**

In response to the loss of more traditional modes of transmission and decreased contexts of use, members of many endangered language communities have begun revitalization programs that include formal teaching. Linguistic documentation of these languages often occurs independently of revitalization efforts and is largely led by outsider academics. Separation of documentation and revitalization is unnecessary. In fact, the two endeavors can readily support and strengthen each other. This paper describes the process of concurrently creating formal teaching materials and a documentary corpus of Kari'nja, an endangered Cariban language of Suriname. Activities described result from a methodological approach to linguistic fieldwork that is collaborative and speech community-based.